

City of Kingston Workplace Violence Prevention Policy & Incident Reporting

The City of Kingston is committed to the safety and security of our employees. Workplace violence presents a serious occupational safety hazard to our agency, staff, and clients. Threats, threatening behavior, or acts of violence against employees, visitors, guests, or other individuals by anyone on City of Kingston property will be thoroughly investigated and appropriate action will be taken, including summoning criminal justice authorities when warranted. All employees are responsible for helping to create an environment of mutual respect for each other as well as clients, following all policies, procedures and program requirements, and for assisting in maintaining a safe and secure work environment.

This policy is designed to meet the requirements of NYS Labor Law 27b and highlights some of the elements that are found within our Workplace Violence Prevention Program. The process involved in complying with this law included a workplace evaluation that was designed to identify the workplace violence hazards our employees could be exposed to. Other tools that were utilized during this process included establishing a committee made up of management and Authorized Employee Representatives who will have an ongoing role of participation in the evaluation process, recommending methods to reduce or eliminate the hazards identified during the process and investigating workplace violence incidents or allegations. All employees will participate in the annual Workplace Violence Prevention Training Program.

The goal of this policy is to promote the safety and well-being of all people in our workplace. All incidents of violence or threatening behavior will be responded to immediately upon notification. The City of Kingston has identified response personnel that include a member of management and an employee representative. If appropriate, the City of Kingston will provide counseling services or referrals for employees.

All City of Kingston personnel are responsible for notifying the contact person designated below, your department head or the Police Dept. of any violent incidents, threatening behavior, including threats they have witnessed, received, or have been told that another person has witnessed or received.

Designated Contact Person:

Name: Kathy Thomas

Title: Director

Department: Civil Service

Phone: 845 334 3921

Location: City Hall

City of Kingston NY

Workplace Violence Prevention

Policy

The City of Kingston NY (City) is the provider of municipal and related community services. The City strives to provide a safe work environment to all of its employees and to those that it serves.

The City is committed to providing a safe work environment for all employees. The City will respond promptly to threats, acts of violence, and acts of aggression by employees or against employees by coworkers, members of the public or others.

The term "workplace violence" is defined as any physical assault, threatening behavior or verbal abuse occurring in the work setting. The City of Kingston prohibits workplace violence and will not tolerate violence, threats of violence, or intimidating conduct in the workplace. Complaints of workplace violence will be given serious attention. Security and safety in the workplace requires the cooperation of every employee.

This policy sets forth standards for employee conduct and guidelines for reasonable precautions. The accompanying procedures outline response to threats or violence should they occur in the workplace whether in a City facility or while performing duties in the City.

The term "workplace" is defined as any location away from an employee's domicile, permanent or temporary, where an employee performs any work-related duty in the course of his or her employment.

The term "employee" is defined as a public employee working for an employer.

The City response may also include removal of third party vendors/contractors from buildings or termination of contracts with such vendors/contractors.

Prohibited Conduct

A. The City will not tolerate any act or threat of violence made in the workplace, on City property, or while in work status for the City.

B. No person may engage in violent conduct or make threats of violence, implied or direct, on City property or in connection with City business. This includes but is not limited to:

1. The use of force with the intent to cause harm, e.g. physical attacks, any unwanted contact such as hitting, fighting, pushing, or throwing objects;
 2. Acts or threats which are intended to intimidate, threaten, coerce, or cause fear of harm whether directly or indirectly;
 3. Acts or threats made directly or indirectly by oral or written words, gestures or symbols that communicate a direct or indirect threat of physical or mental harm.
- C. No person, without legal authority, may carry, possess or use any dangerous weapon on City property or in City buildings or facilities.

Mayor

The Mayor shall be responsible for the implementation of this policy. The responsibility includes distribution of this policy to members of the city workforce, ensuring appropriate investigation and follow-up of reported incidents of workplace violence, appointing a Workplace Violence Advisory Team, and ensuring that administrators, managers and supervisors are aware of their responsibilities under this policy through internal communications and training.

Workplace Violence Advisory Team

A. The Mayor will establish a Workplace Violence Advisory Team. This team, working with the will assist/advise the Mayor to:

1. perform a risk evaluation of the workplace to determine the presence of factors or situations that might place employees at risk of workplace violence;
2. assess the readiness for dealing with workplace violence;
3. facilitate appropriate responses to reported incidents of workplace violence;
4. assess the potential problem of workplace violence and recommend policy, training issues, or security procedures that should be implemented to maintain a safe working environment;
5. evaluate incidents to prevent future occurrences;
6. utilize prevention, intervention, and interviewing techniques in responding to workplace violence;
7. develop workplace violence prevention tools (such as pamphlets, guidelines and handbooks) to assist in recognizing and preventing workplace violence.
8. arrange regularly scheduled workplace violence prevention training sessions for employees.

B. It is recommended that this team include the Police Chief, Fire Chief, City Safety Officer and others, as deemed appropriate by the Mayor.

Workplace Violence Prevention Program

A. The City of Kingston shall develop and implement a written Workplace Violence Prevention Program for its workplaces that includes the following:

1. a definition of workplace violence;
2. commitment to zero tolerance of workplace violence;
3. techniques on how to recognize and avoid workplace violence situations;
4. identification of the high risk occupations;
5. the importance of reporting all workplace violence incidents and the procedure to do so;
6. investigations of incidents by the employer; and
7. employee assistance.

Information and Training for Employees

A. The City shall make the written workplace violence prevention program available, upon request, to its employees and their designated representatives.

B. At the time of employees' initial assignment and annually thereafter, the City shall provide its employees with the following information and training on the risks of violence in their workplace(s):

1. be informed of the requirements of NYS Labor Law 27-b;
2. the risk factors in their workplace(s);
3. the location and availability of the written workplace violence prevention program; and
4. training sessions that outline:
 - a. the measures employees can take to protect themselves from such risks, including specific procedures the City has implemented to protect employees and
 - b. the details of the written workplace violence prevention program developed by the College.

Retaliation

Retaliatory action against anyone acting in good faith who has made a complaint of workplace violence, who has reported witnessing workplace violence, or who has been involved in reporting, investigating, or responding to workplace violence is a violation of this policy. Those found responsible for retaliatory action will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

1 For what constitutes Workplace Violence see the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health's (NIOSH) definition in NYS Department of Labor Division of Safety and Health's, Workplace Violence Prevention Requirements for NYS Public Employers at

<http://www.labor.state.ny.us/workerprotection/safetyhealth/doc/Workplace%20Violence%20FlyerNov3.doc>

2 For a description of a risk evaluation see the NYS Department of Labor Division of Safety and Health's, Workplace Violence Prevention Requirements for NYS Public Employers at

<http://www.labor.state.ny.us/workerprotection/safetyhealth/doc/Workplace%20Violence%20FlyerNov3.doc>

3 From the New York State Department of Labor Division of Safety and Health's, Workplace Violence Prevention Requirements for New York State Public Employers at

<http://www.labor.state.ny.us/workerprotection/safetyhealth/doc/Workplace%20Violence%20FlyerNov3.doc>